

The Critic and Good Literature

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Full Streams.

RIDING across the country of a bright day in March, I saw and felt, as if for the first time, what a pleasing feature is given to the landscape at this season by the full, clear streams. They come to the front, as it were, and lure and hold the eye. There are no weeds, or grasses, or foliage to hide them; they are full to the brim, and fuller; they catch and reflect the sunbeams, and are about the only objects of life and motion in nature. The trees stand so still, the fields are so hushed and naked, the mountains so exposed and rigid, that the eye falls upon the blue, sparkling, undulating water-courses with a peculiar satisfaction. By and by the grass and trees will be waving, and the streams will be shrunken and hidden, and our delight will not be in them. The still ponds and lakelets will then please us more.

The little brown brooks,—how swift and full they ran! One fancied something gleeful and hilarious in them. And the large creeks,—how steadily they rolled on, trailing their ample skirts along the edges of the fields and marshes, and leaving ragged patches of water here and there! Many a gentle slope spread, as it were, a turfy apron in which reposed a little pool or lakelet. Many a stream sent little detachments across lots, the sparkling water seeming to trip lightly over the unbroken turf. Here and there an oak or an elm stood knee-deep in a clear pool, as if rising from its bath. It gives one a liquid, genial feeling, to see such a bountiful supply of pure, running water. One's desires and affinities go out toward the full streams. How many a parched place they reach and lap in one's memory! How many a vision of naked pebbles and sun-baked banks they cover and blot out! They give eyes to the fields; they give dimples and laughter; they give light and motion. *Running water!* What a delightful suggestion the words always convey! One's thoughts and sympathies are set flowing by them; they unlock a fountain of pleasant fancies and associations in one's memory; the imagination is touched and refreshed.

March water is clean, sweet water; every brook is a trout-brook, a mountain brook; the cold and the snow have supplied the condition of a high latitude; no stagnation, no corruption, comes down stream now as on a summer freshet. Winter comes down—liquid and repentant. Indeed, it is more than water that runs then: it is frost subdued; it is spring triumphant. No obsolete water courses now. The larger creeks seek out their abandoned beds, return to the haunts of their youth, and linger fondly there, and (as one might say if disposed to levity) do a good deal of reflecting. The muskrat is adrift, but not homeless; his range is vastly extended, and he evidently rejoices in full streams. Through the tunnel of the meadow-mouse the water rushes as through a pipe; and that nest of his, that was so warm and cosy beneath the snow-bank in the meadow-bottom, is sodden or afloat. But meadow-mice are not afraid of water. On various occasions I have seen them swimming about the spring pools like muskrats, and

when alarmed, dive beneath the water. Add the golden willows to the full streams, with the red-shouldered starlings perched amid their branches, sending forth their strong, gurgling notes—notes like running water fretted by pebbles,—and the picture is complete. The willow branches appear to have taken on a deeper yellow in spring; perhaps it is the effect of the stronger sunshine, perhaps it is the effect of the swift, vital water lavishing their roots. Certain it is that the epaulettes of the starlings are brighter than when they left us in the fall, and they appear to get brighter daily until the nesting begins. The males arrive many days before the females and, perched along the marshes and water-courses, send forth their liquid, musical notes, passing the call from one to the other, as if to guide and hurry their mates forward.

The noise of a brook, you may observe, is by no means in proportion to its volume. The full March streams make far less noise in proportion to their size than the shallower streams of summer, because the rocks and pebbles that cause the sound are deeply buried beneath the current. 'Still waters run deep' is not so true as 'deep waters run still.' I rode for half a day along the upper Delaware, and my thoughts almost unconsciously faced toward the full, clear river. Both the Delaware and the Susquehanna have a starved, impoverished look in summer—unsightly stretches of naked drift and bare bleaching rocks. But behold them in March, after the frost has turned over to them the moisture it has held back and stored up as the primitive forests used to hold the summer rains. Then they have an easy, ample, triumphant look, that is a feast to the eye. A plump, well-fed stream is as satisfying to behold as a well-fed animal, or a thrifty tree. One source of charm in the English landscape is the full, placid stream the season through; no desiccated water-courses will you see there, nor any feeble, decrepit brooks, hardly able to get over the ground.

This condition of our streams and rivers in spring is evidently but a faint reminiscence of their condition during what we may call the geological spring-time, the March or April of the earth's history, when the annual rainfall appears to have been vastly greater than at present, and when the water-courses were consequently vastly larger and fuller. In pleistocene days the earth's climate was evidently much damper than at present. It was the rainiest of March weather. On no other theory can we account for the enormous erosion of the earth's surface, and the ploughing of the great valleys. Prof. Newberry finds abundant evidence that the Hudson was, in former times, a much larger river than now. Prof. Zittel reaches the same conclusion concerning the Nile, and Humboldt was impressed with the same fact while examining the Orinoco and the tributaries of the Amazon. All these rivers appear to be but mere fractions of their former selves. If not Noah's flood, then evidently some other very wet spell, of which this is a tradition, lies far behind us. Something like the drought of summer is beginning upon the earth; the great floods have dried up; the rivers are slowly shrinking; the water is penetrating farther and farther into the cooling crust of the earth, and what was ample to drench and cover its surface, even to make a Noah's flood, will be but a drop in the bucket, to the vast interior of the cooled sphere.

JOHN BURROUGHS.

Reviews

Forbes's "Chinese Gordon."

"THEY say I do not trust Englishmen!" once said shrewd old Ismail. "Do I mistrust Gordon Pasha? That is an honest man; an administrator, not a diplomatist." As with so many others of his countrymen, in Gordon's case 'the path of duty was the way to glory.' Possessing no qualities of mind which every reader of this review does

* Chinese Gordon. A Succinct Record of his Life. By Archibald Forbes. 81. George Routledge & Sons.

not share with him, his achievements are the talk of the world. And all the time he has had no other object in view than the accomplishment of the task immediately before him. The story of his life's march—career one cannot well call it—will be found to possess exceptional interest. We propose in this review to touch briefly upon a few of its features by way of introduction to Mr. Forbes's volume.

Gordon's victories over the Taiping rebels were gained at the head of a force of Chinese varying in numbers from three to five thousand, self-styled the Ever-Victorious Army, but known to the enemy as the False Foreign Devils, from their European accoutrements. The corps was originally recruited by two Americans, Ward and Burgevine, and was employed by the merchants of Shanghai. The commissioned officers were exclusively foreigners, and a most miscellaneous lot they were. Americans were in the majority, but there were Englishmen, Germans, Frenchmen, Spaniards, Italians, Poles and Greeks. Some were ex-mates of merchant ships, some old soldiers (rankers) of good character, some adventurers and refugees of no character at all. In one month eleven officers died of delirium tremens. Ward was a man of courage and ability, who drilled his motley regiments to a fair degree of efficiency, and met at first with considerable success in the field. At his death the command of the Ever-Victorious Army fell into incompetent hands, and the corps met with reverses which sapped its confidence in itself. The Chinese governor begged Sir Charles Staveley, then in command of the British troops at Shanghai, to appoint an English officer in the place of Burgevine. Staveley designated Major Gordon, then just turned thirty, and known as an able and experienced officer of engineers. An Imperialist army co-operated with Gordon, but the co-operation seems to have consisted largely in butchering the prisoners the Englishman took. The result of Gordon's campaign may be summed up in the language of Colonel Chesney: 'During sixteen-months' campaigning under his guidance, the Ever-Victorious Army had taken four cities and a dozen minor strong places, fought innumerable combats, put *hors de combat* numbers of the enemy, moderately estimated at fifteen times its own, and, finding the rebellion vigorous and aggressive, had left it at its last gasp, confined to the ruined capital of the usurper.' All this in spite of mutinies and quarrels within the command, of ranks refilled with captured rebels, of men and officers coming and going at pleasure. Comment on such achievements is superfluous.

Gordon's early victories were due in great measure to his employment of gunboats upon the creeks and canals which intersect the district of Kiangnan. A characteristic exploit was the reduction of Juinsan. A great city, strongly fortified, and held by a garrison of from 12,000 to 15,000 men, was virtually taken by a handful of riflemen and a little river steamboat, at a cost of two killed and five wounded. The story is told by Mr. Forbes with a vivacity worthy of his subject, and one's admiration is divided between Gordon and his American skipper, Davidson. Gordon 'never carried any other weapon than a little cane, with which he used to direct his followers, and which got for itself the name of "Gordon's magic wand of victory." His Chinese soldiers, seeing him always in front among the bullets, yet never wounded, concluded that he bore a charmed life, and that it was the "magic wand" which gave him protection.' The spell was broken, however, toward the end of the campaign, and concurrently with his wound came reverses, which somewhat clouded the close of the Ever-Victorious Army's career. These reverses were due in part to over confidence, in part to the inferior material of Gordon's latest levies. But at the capture of Chanchufu Gordon's force retrieved its laurels, and earned the honorable discharge which it soon received. The large money present offered to Gordon [by the Chinese Government] he declined, as he had done the previous grant. He had spent his pay in

promoting the efficiency of his force. "I leave China as poor as when I entered it," were the simple, modest words he wrote home. This rare disinterestedness was a part of Gordon's character, and was again shown by him when in 1874 he refused to accept as Governor of the Equatorial Soudan a larger salary than £2000, although offered £10,000 by the Khedive. Humanity is another conspicuous trait in Gordon's character. When, after the surrender of Soochow, Governor Li violated the terms of capitulation by cutting to pieces the rebel Wango, Gordon seized his revolver and would have taken instant vengeance on his perjured ally, but for the latter's precipitate flight. His indignation was such that he resigned his command, and was only persuaded to resume it after great solicitation. At the capture of Lujang he distributed provisions to the starving peasantry, and the numerous inscriptions of 'God bless the Kernel' on the fences at Gravesend showed in what light he was regarded by his fellow-townsmen. When at home 'the workhouse and the infirmary were his constant haunts, and of pensioners he had a countless number. Many of the dying sent for him in preference to the clergy. He even sent some of his medals to the melting-pot in the cause of charity.'

Gordon's career as Governor of the Equatorial Provinces and afterward as Governor-General of the Soudan is one long record of prodigious journeys, of perilous situations where foolhardiness was policy, of wars with slave-hunters and oppressors, of battles with the untamed wilderness. What was the talisman that kept him forever safe and victorious? Mr. Forbes mutters 'personal magnetism'—that vague phrase which does duty with indolent thinkers for a definition of the qualities that sway mankind. Gordon himself attributes his success to prayer; and if '*laborare est orare*' he is half right. Patience can still remove mountains, whatever may be true of faith. Perhaps honesty and fearlessness are the qualities which have most aided Gordon, as they certainly are the qualities most characteristic of the man.

Mr. Forbes's book has a timeliness that is almost suspicious. Well-told as the story is, it bears evident marks of haste in preparation, and there are one or two palpable slips. It 'makes no pretence to be anything more than a compilation and an abridgment,' and its author has no personal acquaintance with General Gordon. This latter fact may explain a certain absence of life-likeness in the portrait of Gordon which Mr. Forbes has drawn from hearsay. We conceive that Gordon in scarcely the chivalrous hero of Mr. Forbes's imagination; but no one disputes his right to the name of a brave and whole-souled English officer, who has at all times done his best, 'by the help of God, to keep the balance level.'

Peter the Great.*

In these volumes we have Mr. Schuyler's serial, originally published in *Scribner's Monthly*, re-arranged and largely re-written. It is a pleasure and a relief, amid the flood of compends, abridgments, elegant extracts, and pen-and-ink sketches, to come upon a piece of honest scholarly and thorough work like this. To this task Mr. Schuyler has brought exceptional qualifications. His long residence in Russia has made him familiar with the Slavonic tongues, and given him access to a multitude of original documents; while his acquaintance with the political history of Russia has been formed from the standpoint of a diplomat. To these must be added a tireless perseverance and a plodding industry applied to the search and sifting of a mass of material which might easily have daunted a less enthusiastic and conscientious student. It is seldom that our scholarly Americans make so good use of a residence abroad; and Mr. Schuyler's achievement is the more significant from

*Peter the Great, Emperor of Russia. By Eugene Schuyler. \$20. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

the fact that he had not merely to say over again in his own way what others had said before him, nor even to present the same outlines in a new light and from a different point of view, but actually to draw a new portrait. The character of Peter had been overlaid with popular fable, and distorted under superficial treatment. Mr. Schuyler was compelled to do in his book something of the same kind as Carlyle did for Cromwell, though, on the whole, with an opposite result; for the figure of Peter, stripped of its legendary incrustations, does not gain in dignity. One does not lay down the book with the feeling that he has been walking with a great general or a far-seeing statesman, however he may be impressed with his native vigor, force of will and indomitable energy. He was capable of contemplating great results for Russia, but his wisdom did not keep pace with his passion for Russian aggrandizement. His attempts to solve his problem appear rather as experiments, than as the outcome of a large, deep and far-seeing policy. Himself at once the product and the master of a semi-barbaric race, and captivated by the developments of western civilization, he vainly thought to recast Russia, by sheer force, into the moulds of the occident. To build a St. Petersburg, to clip the beards of his subjects and shorten the robes of his nobles, to import the models and methods of western ship-builders, to invite foreign generals, statesmen and professors into his empire—all this could not make his subjects western Europeans. 'One blame,' says Mr. Schuyler, 'may, we think, be rightly attached to Peter; that he brought Russia prematurely into the circle of European politics. As to the effect upon Europe, contemporary national rivalries hinder a fair conclusion. As to that upon Russia there can be but one opinion. The result has been to turn the rulers of Russia away from home-affairs and the regular development of internal institutions, to foreign politics and the creation of a great military power. In this sense it cannot be deemed beneficial to Russia.' It needs all the evidence of Peter's love for Russia and the Russian people, to reconcile us to his personal characteristics. Only conventionally religious, not a model husband, coarse and boorish in manners, with a peasant's taste for vulgar shows and mummeries, breaking into childish outbursts of furious passion, a true Slav in his love of drink, he exemplifies the familiar proverb 'scratch a Russian, and you find a Tartar.'

In point of style, Mr. Schuyler seems to us to have improved upon his 'Turkestan.' He is easier and lighter in these volumes, without any sacrifice of vigor or directness. His manner is simple and natural, without any attempt at rhetorical effect. Moreover, he attempts no elaborate analysis of character, but leaves the reader to construct the portrait for himself out of the abundant and skilfully disposed materials before him. Few biographies with which we are acquainted are freer from 'padding' than this. It is solidly worked up from beginning to end. There is no eking out of scanty information with moral reflections; the author does not make hazy views of history or of diplomacy more hazy by ornate declamation. The work is peculiar for its cool and judicial tone. Peter does not inspire his biographer. He is a factor in the study of Russia. The book is a real and solid contribution to historic literature. As to the exterior, it forms two handsome volumes, with heavy paper and cleanly-cut type, the whole profusely and well illustrated, and in every way creditable to the publishers.

"The Dance of Modern Society."*

UNTIL the end of the world, young people will dance. Against this instinct theologians and theorists who aim, not to modify, but to destroy, will have no more effect than had King Canute and Mrs. Partington in their struggles to drive back the Atlantic Ocean. Mr. Wilkinson is fain to

make the effort, however, and feeling as he does about it, he is quite right to speak with the earnestness and plainness which he does not hesitate to use; but we confess for ourselves, though we are far from believing in unmitigated dancing, if it came to the question of brushing the bloom from a young girl's mind by sending her to a dancing-school, or even to parties, for a year, or letting her read Mr. Wilkinson's opinions of the dance, we would trust her innocence to the dancing-master and the partner rather than to the book. To examine Mr. Wilkinson's arguments in detail: He does not at first appear to be of those who condemn dancing *per se*; he confesses that dancing in itself is no more harmful than walking, and that compared with the 'kissing games,' tolerated by people who will not let their children move faster than a walk, the dance may even be a step toward reform. But he takes this back when he comes to the conclusion that all rivers flow into the sea, and that you had better not dance with your brother or grandfather because the temptation will be sure to assail you to extend the liberty to your cousin. Still he evidently does not belong to that strictest sect of objectors, one of whom, when answered by a young girl whom he was cross-questioning as to her fitness to join the Church, that she did not know how to dance, persisted, with bent brows: 'But, Agnes, do you feel in your heart any *desire* for notoriety as a dancer?'

Mr. Wilkinson practically objects to the dance, not because it is dancing, but because it drags in its train ill health, extravagance, and immorality. The ill health follows from late hours, imprudent dressing, and exposure; but really is not the question at issue, then, one of late hours and carelessness, rather than of dancing? Why not bend the argument to persuading girls to dress properly and to go to bed reasonably, instead of trying to make them give up dancing? Mr. Wilkinson says that young ladies lace for the dance; but the girl who laces for the dance laces for breakfast; she would lace on a desert island, if she had not even a mirror, to enjoy the consciousness of looking, as she thinks, 'beautifully'; and the girls who go to an open window when overheated from dancing are the same girls who will not wear rubbers to school on a rainy day if they can help it. What we need to talk to them about is the carelessness, not the dancing. The charge of extravagance and conspicuousness does not hold good. If dancing were given up, those who are extravagant and conspicuous in the social world would find a way to spend money and have their toilettes described at dinners, lunches, card-parties and church. The charge of immorality is, of course, a graver one; of that, each must judge for himself; but as we have said before, we should be sorry to imbue any young girl's mind with the views held of it by Mr. Wilkinson. He brings up as his proudest argument, 'Why do girls never care to dance with girls, or boys with boys?' In the first place, this is not true; girls do like to dance with girls, as recess at a girls' school will testify. But has Mr. Wilkinson forgotten that the most beautiful dancing in the world is done *alone*? Granting, however, that girls prefer dancing with boys, the problem is no worse than in a thousand other matters. Why does a hostess knit her pretty brows for days over a dinner-party, to secure an even number of ladies and gentlemen? In short, why do men like women, and women like men? Because God created them to like each other. Mr. Wilkinson tries to treat the gymnastic phrase of the question dispassionately; but he is sure that if 'hirelings' can give such grace to our children's bodies, the Christian refinement of home ought to work still greater wonders. Perhaps it ought; but as a matter of fact, it doesn't. No amount of Christian feeling will make your daughter walk gracefully, if she is not graceful by nature or trained to be so by art. When William Henry's mother wished to send him to dancing-school to learn how to enter a room, he objected that he 'guessed he knew how to enter a room: go right in!' This is part of it certainly, but not

* The Dance of Modern Society. By William Cleaver Wilkinson. New York: Funk & Wagnalls.

the whole. Mr. Wilkinson's other arguments, to the effect that all amusement is a mistake and that the man who thinks he needs diversion only needs a sofa or an axe, are windmills which we shall not try to combat.

After all, we are far more with him than he suspects. Whirling by a dancing-hall the other evening on the elevated road, out of hearing of the magical music, we confess to a sudden sense of ridiculousness of educated human beings amusing themselves for an entire evening in hopping about a room. Yet it is not ridiculous, and our young people must dance. The remedy lies in making dancing one of the accomplishments, the accessories, the diversions of life, not as it is now, with many, the end and aim of existence. Teach children to care for other things besides dancing, and you need not care how much they like dancing too. The great error of the time is children's dancing-parties. Send your children to a dancing-school by all means, and to occasional dancing-parties as they grow older; but let a few boys or girls drop into lunch or dinner, and give now and then a state lunch-party, where they must make their little brains help them in entertaining, instead of teaching them to centre life's attractiveness in imitation valenciennes dresses and a wider sash than any other girl's. In other words, let us dance wisely—that is, not too much; though we may subject ourselves to the epigrams of the maiden whose father let her dance informally after tea, but drew the line at a dancing-teacher; to which the little damsel protested: 'I'm sure I don't see why it is proper to dance and improper to dance well!'

The Parables of Christ.*

THERE has long been a need of a full and thorough study of the New Testament parables on some systematic plan and in the spirit of modern scholarship. So remarkable and so characteristic are the parables of Christ, and so essential also to the unfolding of his thought, that they deserve and need a special treatment. Those who have had occasion to use Trench's work on the parables have felt how inadequate its author is in some directions, and especially because he too much allows theology to color his interpretations. The very simplicity and homeliness of this form of teaching demand for it great skill in order to its right exposition. One class of interpreters has found too much of theology in the parables and another has seen in them too much of the controversies of the time when the Gospels were written. Many of the difficulties which other commentators have stumbled over have been avoided by Prof. Bruce, and he has produced a work of great merit. He has been successful in making a sensible and a rational classification of the parables, and one which is a help to an understanding of their spirit and purpose. He has divided them into three classes, the theoretic parables, and those of grace and judgment. He has also followed the historic method of exposition, seeking whatever help he can from the actual life of the people of Palestine, and avoiding the allegorical as not in agreement with a teacher so simple and straightforward in his methods and aims as Jesus was. Many writers have stumbled by looking for too allegorical and mysterious results, and so have burrowed deep in the earth, when the open sunshine was the place in which to look for what they wished. Prof. Bruce has tried to get at the situation in such a way as to realize the surroundings of Jesus on each occasion of the delivery of a parable, and then to comprehend how the parable helped to make the teaching of the Master living and real to those who heard him. He has left little to be desired in the way of thoroughness, scholarship, and broad-minded interpretation. He may not have written the final work on the subject, but he has given us a book which will be likely to take the place of all present similar treatises. His method is liberal and yet judicious,

guided by recent scholarship and yet carefully conservative, spiritual in tone and yet calmly intellectual. Especially is the work to be commended for its method of spiritual and rational interpretation in preference to the merely theological. The moral and religious conclusions drawn from the parables are sensible, suggestive and thoughtful. They avoid the homiletic spirit and are equally remote from religious namby-pambyism.

A Comparative Study of Politics.*

FROM some of the doctrines laid down in this book we must dissent. When the authors say that the nation is an organism they do not define in what sense they use that word. The nation can be an organism in no such sense as that in which it is used by physiologists and botanists. We believe the idea to be conveyed is the correct one, but if this new meaning is to be given to the word organism a new and clearer definition should be made. Nor can we be persuaded to think that all sovereign bodies are complete despotisms, or that physical force is necessary to the maintenance of a nation. To us it seems utterly untrue to say that just in proportion to the amount of force it exerts a nation is real. The power of moral influence over most men is here quite overlooked, and it is worth more in all civilized lands than standing armies or police regulations. It is for this reason we object to the classifying of Turkey and the United States as in the same degree sovereign political bodies. Individual liberty is quite too much neglected in such theories as these, and the place of force is quite too prominent. Having made these objections to the present work, we are prepared to praise it in a very hearty manner. It is an able and important contribution to the study of American politics. The comparative method is followed with excellent results, and we are given the helps which a true study of other nations and systems of government is capable of lending to an understanding of our own history and politics. After a discussion of the methods and purposes of government the political history of the United States is taken up. Following the historic method, the authors first show in what way we are indebted to our heritage in the British colonies in America. Then the great problems suggested by our political history are treated, one after another, in a most interesting and profitable manner. Much light is thrown on these problems, as to the value and utility of the bicameral system of legislation, the initiative in legislation, and the origin and nature of political parties. The treatment of the old problem of federal power and states'-rights is of great value. The authors rightly claim that in all federal governments the tendency is either to an increase of the central power or else to a destruction of the nation. The comparative method pursued throughout the work is one of the greatest value, and its conclusions need to be strongly impressed upon the attention of Americans.

"God and the Future Life."†

IN this little book Mr. Nordhoff has undertaken to present that kind of evidence for Christianity which will best meet the intellectual tendencies of the time, and to present this in such a way as to adapt it to the wants and capacities of young people. In both of these efforts he has succeeded admirably, giving us a fresh and plainly written book of much value. He has written directly to the wants of young people who are beginning to inquire about the great questions of religion, and with an earnest and honest manner much to be commended. He avoids all abstruse subjects, and he does not go into the merely historical evidences, or into those depending on the analogies of nature. His line of evidence is practical, and appeal to facts lying about every person, and to the higher faculties of the mind. Occa-

* Parabolic Teaching of Christ. By Alexander Balman Bruce, D.D. New York: A. C. Armstrong & Co.

* Politics: An Introduction to the Study of Comparative Constitutional Law. By William W. Crane and Bernard Moses. \$1.50. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

† God and the Future Life: The Reasonableness of Christianity. By Charles Nordhoff. \$1. New York: Harper & Brothers.

sionally he uses a word we could wish he had not used, some of his arguments against materialism and scepticism are overdrawn, and occasionally he seems to press the argument for some smaller matter of belief too far; but for the most part he is fair, broad-minded, and thoroughly true in method. The book is one which may well be put into the hands of every young person; and so closely has the author kept to the best line of argument and to the essential subjects of inquiry for such a work, that all denominations alike may use it with profit and satisfaction. The topics discussed in the eighteen chapters are the importance and reasonableness of faith, man as an individual and accountable being, the necessity of a living faith, faith and science, science and the future life, the limits of speculation, moral as well as physical laws, the Bible as a book, the mystery of pain, the limit of authority, miracles, the nature of the future life, prayer, and the conduct of life.

Minor Notices.

MR. LEONARD WHEELER in his dedication of 'Erothanatos and Sonnets' (James Miller) tells us that his 'solemn song' is

Attempt ambitious, with a ray of hope
To pierce the dark abysses of thought, to guide
Its dim ghosts o'er the towering crags of Doubt
Unto the land where Peace and Love abide,
Of flowers and streams, and sun and stars.

His 'solemn song' is certainly very solemn for a song with so cheerful a purpose. We have rarely read, indeed, a book with so large a proportion of unhappy words in it. Frozen shrouds, souls a-chill with agony, things wan and gray, icy demons, scourging willow-branches, snow-heaped mounds, black and freezing nights, cups of sorrow drained to the lees, etc., are presented in such profusion that to struggle through the 'dark abyss' in search of the 'ray of hope' is much like taking a cup of poison to learn the sweetness of its antidote. Mr. Wheeler in one of his stanzas invites his soul to 'come and walk abroad' with him. If he ever found it possible to walk abroad without his soul, the fact would have been worth chronicling; but if it is true that he only desires to have his soul with him occasionally, we should advise him to walk abroad alone, and invite his soul to sit beside him in the hours he devotes to composition.

'LIGHT IN LANDS OF DARKNESS,' by Robert Young (Cassell), is a record of missionary labor among the Greenlanders, Patagonians, Syrians, Armenians, Nestorians, Persians, Egyptians and Jews. It is chiefly statistical, though there are occasional descriptions of the superstitions and religious customs of those among whom the missionaries have worked. It is perhaps needless to mention that the 'light' described is that of the single torch carried in the hand of the single laborer, or at the most that of the combined torches of a society of laborers, and not the illumination which comes from the gradual civilization that brings religion in its train, and which is a blessing even when it comes in the guise of the spirit satirized by Max O'Rell: 'Give us your territory, and we will give you our Bible!' The point of view is that of people who have carried into heathen lands not Christ, but Christ crucified; and the spirit with which the author exults in the fact that missionaries have not tried the 'unintelligible and fruitless' scheme of teaching the self-sacrificing life of Christ, but have relied solely on his 'atoning death' in appealing to heathen who perhaps understand 'blood' when they would fail to appreciate nobleness, suggests to us that while there may be more light in lands of darkness, there is certainly still a little darkness in the lands of light.

TO THE BEST of our belief, Mr. James Payn has never written anything not worth reading. His latest story, 'The Canon's Ward' (Franklin Square Library), does not amount to much as a story, although the interest does not flag; but it is full of the quiet wit which has been so enjoyable in all his other stories, and the terse characterization which gives us the man or the woman in a single sentence. Thus we have, in 'The Canon's Ward,' the optimist who can think of no other way to comfort a father for his son's going to India than by exclaiming: 'As to India, just think how your Indian enjoys getting home;' the young lady sure that she cannot have overdrawn her account, because she has still 'three checks left in her check-book,' and later 'praying Heaven to forgive her for her folly and disobedience,

and (especially) to shield her from the consequences of them;' and Mr. Perry, a young man 'whose education had been classical and did not, therefore, include spelling,' and who belonged to the class of men that 'can seldom stand against a woman's righteous indignation, unless she happens to be his wife.'

CARMEN SYLVA'S 'Pilgrim Sorrow' (Holt) would be interesting, whatever it might prove as literary art, in bringing a little nearer to us the Queen who writes under that *nom-de-plume*, and whose life in her little kingdom of Roumania has been so noble and so romantic. As literary art it proves not uninteresting also, though it is written in the form of allegory of which the reading world is rather weary. It can be said that the little tales are all simple and unpretentious, and while exhibiting no marked ability are free from glaring fault. We may add that it is a pleasure to handle a book so finely printed on such excellent paper. The famous rivulet of text meandering in a meadow of margin is not to be laughed at after all. If it is true that critics ever are influenced in judgment by anything but the true inwardness of a book, we believe the disturbing influence is oftener printer's ink than indignation.

Thackeray and Willis.

TO THE CRITIC AND GOOD LITERATURE:

Permit me to correct a trifling error in your interesting article of last week—'Thackeray and N. P. Willis.' *The Corsair* was not exactly 'transformed into *The Mirror*.' The former came to an end in March, 1840, and the subscription-list was transferred to *The Albion*. The old *New York Mirror* (founded in 1823) went on till December, 1842, under the editorship of Gen. G. P. Morris. Mr. Willis had no editorial connection with it, though he was a frequent contributor. In April, 1843, the *New Mirror* was begun, of which Willis became editor jointly with Morris. There was therefore an interval of three years between the demise of *The Corsair* and the next appearance of Willis as an editor.

The real editor of *The Corsair* was Dr. T. O. Porter, brother to William T. Porter, 'the tall son of York' and conductor of *The Spirit of the Times*. Willis was virtually only foreign correspondent for the paper, as he went abroad two months after it was started and did not return till after its discontinuance. His name, however, was joined with Dr. Porter's as editor, and his weekly letters from England formed the chief attraction of the paper. There is a letter in my possession, from Willis to his associate, dated at London, July 26, 1839, an extract from which may possibly interest some of your readers: 'I have engaged a contributor to *The Corsair*. Who do you think? The author of "Yellowplush" and "Major Gahagan." I have mentioned it in my jottings, that our readers may know all about it. He has gone to Paris, and will write letters from there and afterwards from London for a guinea a *close column* of *The Corsair*—cheaper than I ever did anything in my life. I will see that he is paid for a while, to see how you like him. For myself, I think him the *very best periodical writer alive*. He is a royal, daring, fine creature, too. I take the responsibility of it. You will hear from him soon.'

Thackeray breakfasted with Willis when this engagement was made, and agreed to furnish a letter a week. But there was delay in the transmission of the mails, the steam service being new and irregular. Only eight of these letters appeared in *The Corsair*, but to secure them at all, at that day, was a stroke of journalistic enterprise.

NEW HAVEN, April 28, 1884.

HENRY A. BEERS.

Goldsmith's "Triumph of Benevolence."

TO THE CRITIC AND GOOD LITERATURE:

I received from a correspondent in Baltimore the other day the following inquiry: 'I purchased yesterday a book called "Triumph of Benevolence; or, The History of Francis Wills, by the Author of The Vicar of Wakefield, Berlin, Sold by August Mylius, 1786." Did you ever hear of such a book attributed to Goldsmith, or is it a fraud and forgery?' This inquiry was sent to Mr. Allibone, of the Lenox Library, who has kindly furnished me with the following memoranda upon the subject:

In this year [1772] he [Goldsmith] wrote portions of a tale for Newberry but rejected by him, intended to be of the same character as "The Vicar of Wakefield." For an account of the announcement in Paris of "Histoire de François Wills," see the biographies of Goldsmith. —Allibone's 'Dict. of Authors.'

'Former money transactions between them involving unfilled engagements for a new story, remained yet uncanceled. . . . But a better understanding between the publisher and his creditor [Garrick], on the faith of certain completed chapters of his long-promised tale, had now arisen.'—Forster's 'Life and Times of Oliver Goldsmith.'

'New advances are procured from Newberry on the promise of a new tale in the style of "The Vicar of Wakefield," of which he showed him a few roughly sketched chapters. It never was finished. The bookseller . . . objected to it as a mere narrative version of "The Good-natured Man." Goldsmith, too easily put out of conceit of his writings, threw it aside. The loss of the MS. is deeply to be regretted.'—Irving's 'Life of Goldsmith.'

'The novel thus mentioned as rejected he afterward read in the family of Mr. Bunbury, and by one of the ladies then present it is very well remembered as being taken from the comedy ["She Stoops to Conquer"], though the impression remains that it was unfinished. What became of the MS. or the name given to it is unknown. This uncertainty warrants perhaps a conjecture, in the absence of more positive information. In the "Omniana" of Mr. Southey we find the following notice: "A fraud has been practised in France upon Goldsmith's reputation. At the end of a volume which bears date 1774 is the following title, in a list of new books: 'Histoire de François Wills; ou, Le Triomphe de la Bienfaisance, par l'Auteur du Ministre de Wakefield, traduction de l'Anglais.'" It is just possible that this may be the novel of which we are told, and that the author, considering it too inconsiderable to be acknowledged, or more probably leaving it incomplete, the conclusion may have been added by another hand, and the facts by some means communicated to the French translator. The original, if it was ever really published in England, will no doubt furnish traces of his pen, and the similarity of title is at least remarkable.'—Prior's 'Life of Goldsmith.'

Mr. Allibone adds: 'From the above citations you may judge how very rare and interesting "The Triumph of Benevolence" is. I do not find it in Brunet, Graessé, Lowndes, etc. No one of Goldsmith's biographers has seen it.' B.

NEW YORK, April 29, 1884.

A Last Word About Ice-Bound Eagles.

TO THE CRITIC AND GOOD LITERATURE:

In a recent genial letter from Mr. John Burroughs, in reply to mine inquiring about a point in one of his books, he admits that, on fuller observation, he has found himself mistaken. He adds, 'I am learning what is called the "scientific caution" every year.' In your issue of April 19th you print Mr. Ingersoll's prompt and friendly 'acknowledgment.' Truly the scientists set the rest of the world a good example. They don't argue against facts. Mr. Ingersoll, however, 'cannot help feeling' that my eagle, if not my story at this point, 'must have been in poor health' or in some abnormal condition, while the Rev. Mr. Clapp evidently thinks that *my* bird must be taken with a large grain of salt, if taken at all. After describing an eagle whose 'feathers were' simply 'wet, bedraggled and frozen,' so that 'he could fly a little and fight a good deal' he writes: 'I merely mention this to give Mr. Roe some little foundation for his apocryphal eagle, which is, sure enough, taken in detail, a rather remarkable predicament for the emblem of American liberty to get into.' The inclosed letter from Mr. Richard H. Holder, Honorary Member of the American Ornithologists Union of New York, makes the facts 'colder' still. He describes his bird as a splendid specimen of a live *golden eagle*, and this 'rare, wild, fierce and almost untamable' (see Baird, Brewer and Ridgway) monarch of American birds was 'captured by a boy!'

The bald-eagle, taken at Cornwall, was regarded as an unusually large and fine specimen also, by those who were familiar with the species. Mr. Ingersoll was kind enough to intimate that I had aided in 'scoring a point for science.' This is to me the most astonishing fact in the eagle episode, for I had never expected to do anything of the kind, even by accident, as in this instance. Mr. Holder's letter certainly makes the score too deep ever to be obliterated. I, no more than Burt and Avery, expected that our eagle would be sat upon by grave and reverend ornithologists.

CORNWALL, April 28.

[In the letter referred to above, Mr. Holder tells how, while living at Bloomington, Ill., in 1861, he 'received by express a large box, containing a splendid specimen of a live golden eagle,

from Major Powell, then a teacher at Lacon, Ill., . . . who wrote me that the bird was brought to him encased in ice so completely that it could not move legs or wings, fell from the tree upon which it had perched, and was captured by a boy who brought the bird to him.']

The Lounger

THESE are the days when the urban Lounger finds himself envying the rural Lounger (if in the country there be any who profess this gentle and leisurely science). Something in the Lounger's fancy and memory—as in Falstaff's moribund dream—plays with flowers and babbles o' green fields. Occasionally he is able partially to annihilate the walled-town environment, when, instead of stone under foot, he feels the yielding texture of wood-mould and moss; he sees the nodding trillium with its shadow in the smooth pool; jewel-like young beech-trees and acorn-helmeted young oaks start up in his path; he has an eye for the little, red, infantine fists of the new leaves on the maples, for the slight flickering shade which they cast, for the beauty of the grass and its strange freaks of vernal growth, in which a single ambitious blade rises to play satrap over its brethren. Shutting his physical eye, the Lounger opens his mind's eye on the green lake of a wheat-field rippling in the wind; or he feasts his sight upon a pasture, with here and there Midas-touches of dandelion and buttercup, with its glimpses of the gray head and crescented-breast of the meadow-lark, whose long, smooth, undulating note is the Line of Beauty drawn to the ear's comprehension. The Lounger must needs take his way through the orchard, where already sunny southside boughs are twinkling with blossoms, where the bees hum Arcadian tunes over their work, and hither and yon flits the 'light-winged dryad' of the apple-tree—the oriole, uttering its clear, cool flute-calls.

THE way some authors publish their books nowadays makes them 'scarce' before they are a week old. Mr. Richard Herne Shepherd's dainty little edition of Poe's *Tamerlane*, of which only one hundred copies were printed, and of which not more than two or three have found their way to this country, is a case in point. I understand that the edition has been entirely sold out in England, and at a high price for such a little slip of a book. Not only has the edition been exhausted, but it has already been the subject of a war of words between Mr. Shepherd and Mr. John Ingram, *The Athenaeum* being the battle-ground. Mr. Ingram does not like what he regards as the ignoring of his claim to be the discoverer of 'Tamerlane,' while Mr. Shepherd seems to think that he has given him all the credit due him. The quarrel is one in which the general public takes little or no interest. That it was glad to get this product of Poe's youthful muse is, however, shown by the quick sale of the book containing it.

'TAMERLANE AND OTHER POEMS' was first published in 1827, and was the first book that Poe gave to the world. In the little preface that ushered it in, he says that most of the poems were written in 1821-2, ere he had completed his fourteenth year. They were not intended for publication. 'Why they are now published,' he says, 'concerns no one but himself.' Of the smaller pieces he is candid enough to say that 'perhaps they savor too much of egotism,' and that they were written 'by one too young to have any knowledge of the world but from his own heart.' In 'Tamerlane,' however, he has 'endeavored to expose the folly of even *risking* the best feelings of the heart at the shrine of ambition.' The book was not published until the poet was nineteen years of age. It bears the name of a Boston printer, Calvin F. S. Thomas, on its title-page, but Mr. Woodberry, who is writing the Life of Poe for the American Men-of-Letters Series, can find no trace of Thomas in New England, and no record of the book save in the list of new publications given in *The North American Review* for October, 1827. The copy from which Mr. Herne Shepherd has made the reprint came into the possession of the British Museum in 1867, and is supposed to be unique.

A CORRESPONDENT of *Nature* calls attention to the fact that 'a colony of cats live and breed under the wooden platform of the Victoria Station of the District Railway,' and a later correspondent informs the earlier one that 'there are cats all along the District Railway, both in and out of the tunnels, and many of them—familiarily called "Stumpy" by the men on the line—can testify by the shortness of their tails to the hairbreadth escapes they have had from passing trains.' Which reminds

me of an amusing picture in *Punch*, some years ago, where a young lady, seeing one of these 'stumpies' at a railroad station, gives expression to her delight at the discovery of what she fondly believes to be a 'tailless Manx cat.' 'Tailless Manx cat, indeed,' grumbles the station-master;—'down express-train!'

THE following anonymous communication refers, no doubt, to the Author of 'The Bread-Winners': 'And he is not a physician—certainly not an oculist—or he would not have assumed Maud to be "near-sighted" or to be feigning near-sightedness, from the mere fact that she wore eyeglasses: it might have been hypermetropia or even mixed astigmatism. Neither would he have decided that she should not wear glasses from her recognition of a photograph.'

In a letter from Rome, the *Herald* sounds a note of warning against the Torlonia sculptures, which are said to be for sale. It is even rumored, indeed, that a friend of Prince Torlonia, 'the Roman Rothschild,' has gone to Washington with a view to disposing of the collection in this country. 'The sarcophagi, the collection of Roman portrait-busts, the replica of the Gnidean Venus, the Minerva found at Porto, the Hortensius, the Woman Sitting, and the so-called Livia, would in themselves form a noble collection,' says the *Herald's* correspondent; 'but the patched-up Mercuries and spurious Floras by which they are surrounded are compromising company.' Restorations abound—not honest restorations, which one may detect at a glance, but 'cunning delusions.' 'Every possible means has been resorted to by the restorers to hide their handiwork, and it is only after minutely examining the grain of the marble that you discover the imposture.' One would think we had had enough of this sort of thing in America. But your true American loves to be deceived, and kisses the hand of the—'restorer!'

Our "Forty Immortals."—To O. W. H.*

[William C. Richards in *The Current*.]

RISE, Oliver, Chief of our Forty Immortals,
And make thy best bow for the popular vote—
Which bids thee now enter Fame's wide-swinging portals
Arrayed in a brand-new 'Academy' coat.

Thy wisdom and wit, in their guileless complicity,
Have stolen the hearts of the old and the young—
And set thee by force of a playful plebiscite,
On our ladder of Letters—its uppermost rung.

'Autocrat,' now, of no mere 'breakfast-table,'
For our broad author-land thou shalt fashion the rules,
For prose or for verse, for fact or for fable—
And thy new-born 'Academy' govern its 'schools.'

Like the Anglican Church with its 'Thirty-Nine Articles,'
(Some of them dogmatic and others divine),
Thou art the head of a long train of particles,
The other 'Immortals,'—they are just *thirty-nine*.

Ah, Oliver, since they have made thee the Proctor
Of our Yankee 'Academy'—*à la Française*,
We pray thee forget not thy rôle as a doctor,
And insure to thy 'fellows' a long length of days.

Since should one chance to die—no longer 'immortal,'
Such terrible strife would spring up for his chair,
Half the suitors would fall at the Academy's portal,
And the land would be draped in the pall of despair!

Tennyson on "The Princess."

[From S. E. Dawson's 'A Study of The Princess'.]

DEAR SIR: I thank you for your able and thoughtful essay on 'The Princess.' You have seen, amongst other things, that if women ever were to play such freaks, the burlesque and the tragic might go hand-in-hand. I may tell you that the songs were not an after-thought. Before the first edition came out, I deliberated with myself whether I should put songs in between the separate divisions of the poem. Again, I thought, the poem will explain itself; but the public did not see that the child, as you say, was the heroine of the piece, and at last I conquered my laziness and inserted them. You would be still more certain

that the child was the true heroine if, instead of the first song as it now stands, 'As thro' the land at eve we went,' I had printed the first song which I wrote, 'The losing of the child.' The child is sitting on the bank of a river, and playing with flowers—a flood comes down—a dam has been broken thro'—the child is borne down by the flood—the whole village distracted—after a time the flood has subsided—the child is thrown safe and sound again upon the bank, and all the women are in raptures. I quite forget the words of the ballad, but I think I may have it somewhere.

Your explanatory notes are very much to the purpose, and I do not object to your finding parallelisms. They must always recur. A man (a Chinese scholar) some time ago wrote to me saying that in an unknown, untranslated Chinese poem, there were two whole lines of mine, almost word for word. Why not? Are not human eyes all over the world looking at the same objects, and must there not consequently be coincidences of thought and impressions and expressions. It is scarcely possible for any one to say or write anything in this late time of the world to which, in the rest of the literature of the world, a parallel could not somewhere be found. But when you say that this passage or that was suggested by Wordsworth or Shelley or another, I demur, and more, I wholly disagree. There was a period in my life when, as an artist, Turner for instance, takes rough sketches of landscape, etc., in order to work them eventually into some great picture, so I was in the habit of chronicling, in four or five words or more, whatever might strike me as picturesque in nature. I never put these down, and many and many a line has gone away on the north wind, but some remain, e.g.:

A full sea glazed with muffled moonlight.

Suggestion: The sea one night at Torquay, when Torquay was the most lovely sea-village in England, tho' now a smoky town. The sky was covered with thin vapor, and the moon was behind it.

A great black cloud
Drag inward from the deep.

Suggestion: A coming storm seen from the top of Snowdon. In the 'Idylls of the King':

With all
Its stormy crests that smote against the skies.

Suggestion: A storm which came upon us in the middle of the North Sea.

As the water-lily starts and slides.

Suggestion: Water lilies in my own pond, seen on a gusty day with my own eyes. They did start and slide in the sudden puffs of wind till caught and stayed by the tether of their own stalks—quite as *true* as Wordsworth's simile, and more in detail.

A wild wind shook—follow, follow, thou shalt win.

Suggestion: I was walking in the New Forest. A wind did arise and

Shake the songs the whispers and the shrieks
Of the wild wood together.

The wind, I believe, was a west-wind, but, because I wished the Prince to go south, I turned the wind to the south, and, naturally, the wind said 'follow.' I believe the resemblance which you note is just a chance one. Shelley's lines are not familiar to me, tho', of course, if they occur in the 'Prometheus,' I must have read them. I could multiply instances, but I will not bore you, and far indeed am I from asserting that books, as well as nature, are not, and ought not to be, suggestive to the poet. I am sure that I myself, and many others, find a peculiar charm in those passages of such great masters as Virgil or Milton where they adopt the creation of a by-gone poet, and reclothe it, more or less, according to their own fancy. But there is, I fear, a prosaic set growing up among us, editors of booklets, book-worms, index-hunters, or men of great memories and no imagination, who *impute themselves* to the poet, and so believe that *he*, too, has no imagination, but is forever poking his nose between the pages of some old volume in order to see what he can appropriate. They will not allow one to say 'Ring the bells,' without finding that we have taken it from Sir P. Sydney—or even to use such a simple expression as the ocean 'roars,' without finding out the precise verse in Homer or Horace from which we have plagiarized it. (Fact!)

I have known an old fish-wife, who had lost two sons at sea, clench her fist at the advancing tide on a stormy day and cry out—'Ay! roar, do! how I hates to see thee show thy white teeth!' Now if I had adopted her exclamation and put it into

* See THE CRITIC AND GOOD LITERATURE of April 19.

the mouth of some old woman in one of my poems, I daresay the critics would have thought it original enough, but would most likely have advised me to go to Nature for my old woman and not to my own imagination; and indeed it is a strong figure. Here is another little anecdote about suggestion: When I was about twenty or twenty-one I went on a tour to the Pyrenees. Lying among these mountains before a waterfall that comes down one thousand or twelve hundred feet, I sketched it (according to my custom then) in these words 'Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn.' When I printed this a critic informed me that 'lawn' was the material used in theatres to imitate a waterfall, and graciously added 'Mr. T. should not go to the boards of a theatre but to Nature herself for his suggestions.' And I had gone to Nature herself. I think it is a moot point whether—if I had known how that effect was produced on the stage—I should have ventured to publish the line.

I find that I have written, quite contrary to my custom, a letter, when I had merely intended to thank you for your interesting commentary. Thanking you again for it, I beg you to believe me very faithfully yours
A. TENNYSON.

ALDWORTH, HASLEMERE, SURREY, Nov. 21st, 1882.

P. S. By-the-by, you are wrong about 'the tremulous isles of light': they are 'isles of light,' spots of sunshine coming through the leaves, and seeming to slide from one to the other, as the procession of girls 'moves under shade.' And surely the 'beard-blown' goat involves a sense of the wind blowing the beard on the height of the ruined pillar.

The Disease of Modern Letters.

[From *The Pall Mall Gazette*.]

EGOTISM, that is the prevailing disease of modern writers. Such is the conclusion of a thoughtful article on 'The *I* in Contemporary Literature' in a recent number of the *Revue Politique et Littéraire*, which may well be taken to heart by writers on this side the Channel. M. Guillemot, denouncing the growing tendency of authors and dramatists and artists to thrust themselves and their private life before the public, traces the origin of the malady to America. Unless it is checked, he declares that it must of necessity lower the standard of all modern literary productions. It is natural enough that an author, an artist, or a poet, should be ambitious to leave an honored name to posterity; but that is an altogether different thing from craving to be talked about and marvelled at while in the land of the living. Formerly the poet sang his song, the author told his tale, and the artist completed his work without ever a thought of putting himself to the front. Whether he was married or single, whether tall or short, fair or dark, sanguine or bilious—what had this to do with his work? No one knew and no one cared to know. They gave their spirit, their mind to the world, and besides this they were nothing to the public at large. They remembered Confucius's words, 'Do not talk of yourself either well or evil; because in the former case no one would believe you, and in the latter everybody would.' Within the last two centuries all this has changed. At present all houses are built of glass, the inhabitants themselves being the architects, throwing open to the gaze of the public even those chambers which have hitherto been held sacred in their privacy. 'And is not this fact,' asks M. Guillemot, 'the characteristic of modern society? A curious society, thanks to which the term private life is nothing but a vain phrase, and Paris an immense crystal palace.' Fortunately for France these evils do not originate within its frontiers, but come, like tempests, across the Atlantic from 'that powerful nation which in turn astonishes the world by its grandeur and its folly, its refined civilization and red-Indian barbarities, its love for liberty and its contempt for inferior races; from the United States, which let a Lincoln die and a Barnum live.' The audacious, resolute Americans exercise the same influence on the French which every firm spirit does on the weak and undecided. 'We are as wax in their hands.' It was in America that conferences and lectures originated, the Yankees having always had a great desire to approach the persons of great men. That, however, is due to a physical defect, which incapacitates the American from seeing the difference between a justly celebrated poet and a two-headed calf—a remark which Mr. Arnold will perhaps not be slow to appreciate. It is by no means the deep interest in the works of a great man which excites this curiosity among the people; in the same degree as art declines, the personality of the artist increases in interest. American journalism and reporting strengthen this tendency to pry into the private life of public characters, and France has eagerly taken up the evil habit.

Formerly in France (says M. Guillemot) criminals were condemned to be publicly exposed; to-day we condemn our celebrated men to the same ordeal. . . . Indeed, what have we to do with the private life of the poet in whom we are interested? Are we to imitate the children who break their toys in order to find out what they inclose? The interior, perchance, is not equal to the exterior, and a destroyed illusion is like a broken toy; the pieces are not easily joined again.

There is, however, one kind of egotism inducing an author or artist to put himself into his works, against which no objection is possible. With the idea that within every human being the résumé of the entire human race is hidden, he searches himself, analyzes, observes, and compares the emotions of his own mind as if it were that of another, in order to describe the thoughts and feelings of others. Thence Montaigne and Pascal formed their estimates of others; thence, above all, Molière conceived his best, most life-like characters, and thus Beaumarchais and Rousseau drew upon their own life for their characters on the stage and in the novel. But in spite of this, their private life remained hidden. The artist, the author, or the poet only appeared. The person remained behind the walls of privacy. This form of egotism is admirable; the other, arising from the mere desire to become notorious, is abominable. French literature is undergoing a change; it is in a dangerous crisis, and what with American journalism and mode of life, it runs the danger of succumbing to the fatal malady. There is but one way out of this dilemma, and that is that authors and dramatists should arise, and forgetting themselves, lead others on to a higher life and more exalted sentiments. So far M. Guillemot. But is it indeed true that such a series, say, as 'Celebrities at Home,' really depraves the whole character of our literature? We doubt it; nor do we think a widespread curiosity to see eminent authors in the flesh is fraught with such mischief to their character and work as M. Guillemot pretends. We fail to discover the fatal influence of the disease to which M. Guillemot calls attention, either in Emerson, in Lowell, or in Longfellow.

An Old-School Literary Lady.

[From *The Spectator*.]

'THERE are three classes,' says Coleridge, 'into which all the women past seventy that ever I knew are to be divided: 1. That dear old soul. 2. That old woman. 3. That old witch.' Every one who reads the autobiography of Mrs. Bray, supplemented by the unnecessarily apologetic narrative of her godson, and renews his acquaintance with her 'Talbas,' and 'Protestants,' and 'White Hoods,' with the help of the new edition of her romances which Messrs. Chapman and Hall have so opportunely issued, must say, and say emphatically, that she belongs to the first of Coleridge's three classes. We might even go further, and in an Edgworthian or Irish bull direction, and say that not only was Mrs. Bray 'a dear old soul' during the period—nearly a quarter of a century—that she lived after reaching the Scriptural limit of three-score-and-ten, but that she always was 'a dear old soul.' At all events, if the late Mr. Greg was justified in describing women of a certain class of sympathies as 'old maids *ab ovo*,' we may say that Mrs. Bray belongs to the class of 'dear old souls *ab ovo*.' She was one of those 'Glad hearts! without reproach or blot!' whose lives, unchequered by adventure, undisturbed by passion, are one long walk by moonlight. One great misfortune, indeed, befell her. She suddenly lost her first husband, Charles Stothard, a promising artist, who died through falling from a ladder in a church in which he was engaged in sketching, at a time when she was expecting to become a mother. Then her placid fortitude stood her in good stead. Otherwise, her life was singularly serene. Born in London on Christmas Day, 1790, Anna Eliza Kempe, whose father was of a good Chelsea family, was delicately brought up, and in youth had no more serious annoyances than that caused by the cross temper of an old lady with whom she was brought in contact during her school days. She tells us that she had her little difficulties before her first marriage, which took place in 1818. But, although endowed with beauty of a refined type, she appears to have been in no sense a coquette, and her union with Charles Stothard was but the mellowing of an acquaintanceship. Her marriage was a happy one. She accompanied her husband on his artistic excursions to Normandy and elsewhere, and, inheriting literary tastes, and having been thrown at an early age into the society of literary folks, she wrote letterpress for his sketches, and began the writing of those romances which gave her a pleasing and easy employment till the end of the active portion of her life. Here is her account of a winter evening while Charles Stothard was alive: 'Charles, unless when at the

Antiquarian Society, or engaged in business, spent all his evenings at home, and often read to us till nearly bed-time. How well I remember the scene! My dear father, with his fine and venerable head, seated in his easy-chair, and listening to the stories of Sir Walter Scott or the narratives of Froissart. My dear mother and myself, engaged with the needle, and Charles with the book in his hand, seated in the chimney-corner. This is happiness, undoubtedly, but it is the happiness of the evening of life—the happiness of the 'dear old soul.' Having recovered from her one tragedy—the fatal accident to her husband, followed by the death of her infant child—Mrs. Stothard married the Rev. Edward Bray, Vicar of Tavistock. Her second marriage brought her the perfection of that gentle pleasure for which she was by temperament suited. Mr. Bray was a man of handsome face—as a portrait which is given in this 'Autobiography' shows—and dignified presence who had written *vers de société* in his youth; was an elocutionist of the Kemble school; and hurled 'Trismegistus' at his ignorant but pleased parishioners in sermons that

"Never said or showed

That Earth is foul, that Heaven is gracious,

Without refreshment on the road,

From Jerome or from Athanasius."

Mr. and Mrs. Bray walked in the trim garden of the vicarage of Tavistock or ambled over Dartmoor rich in natural scenery and historical associations talking on some literary or antiquarian subject, or aiding each other in composition. For Mr. Bray thought there were no such romances as Mrs. Bray's and Mrs. Bray thought her Edward the greatest preacher in the world. The slamming of a door by a careless housemaid or the sending by the cook of vegetables to the table under-boiled was the worst affliction they experienced; the visit of some friend from London such as their idol poet-laureate Southey, their greatest event. Mr. Kempe who finds in Mrs. Bray's diary the record of no worse sins than this, 'Spent on myself £5; £1 of this I think I spent foolishly; to mind not to do so again' gives a leaf from one of her journals containing 'a plan of study for the winter.' It closes with 'To practise the hour after dinner that Edward drinks his wine.' On this Mr. Kempe comments:

'What a picture of the tranquil life in that lonely vicarage is conjured up by the last sentence! The dignified figure of the Vicar, sitting bolt upright in his chair, slowly sipping his port of the choicest vintage, as he meditates over his morning studies among the Fathers or in the 'Divina Comedia,' and now and then listens appreciatively as his wife executes some difficult passages of the Kreuzer Sonata with more than ordinary emphasis; followed by the comfortable evening spent in reading aloud (always by her) a chapter of Alison's 'History of Europe,' or of Southey's latest publication; or, on rare occasions, the last finished chapter of one of her own novels, which would be received with that courteous and complacent criticism with which the pair habitually regarded one another's productions and which added so much solid satisfaction and happiness to the lives of both. A picture of rest unattainable in these bustling days!'

The happiest of married unions comes to an end. Mr. Bray died at the age of eighty, and his widow removed to Brompton. In her ninety-fifth year her long and on the whole delightful walk by moonlight came to an end.

The one notable episode in Mrs. Bray's life, with the exception of the death of her first husband, was her attempt to become an actress. As Anna Eliza Kempe, she was an adorer of Shakspeare and Mrs. Siddons, and had pleased her relatives and friends by appearances in what are nowadays known as 'amateur theatricals.' At that time the high character of Mrs. Siddons had temporarily raised the position of the stage, and it was not considered extraordinary that a young lady of refinement should try her fortune on the boards. It was actually arranged that Miss Kempe should appear at the Bath Theatre in the character of Belvidera, in Otway's 'Venice Preserved.' But she caught cold in travelling from London to Bath, her engagement was cancelled, and she was mortified to find that in voice and in physical respects generally she was unequal to the career of an actress. So she drifted into literature. But Mrs. Bray never really lived in the city of letters; she never got beyond the suburbs. She met Sir Walter Scott, Gifford, and Mrs. Opie, but she was in no sense intimate with them, and her impressions of them seem as slight and superficial as her criticisms of such different authors as Rousseau and Richardson, which are to be found in her autobiography. Her one literary friend was Southey, who reviewed some of her works, kept up a correspondence with her, and visited Tavistock Vicarage in 1836, along with his son, the Rev. Cuthbert Southey. We confess, however, that this book adds little to our knowledge of Southey.

His letters to Mrs. Bray are largely of the nature of good advice and kindly criticism. There are some passages in them relating to his own 'Doctor' which are rather puzzling. In one letter, he says:

'The Doctor' has been sent me, with the author's compliments, in a hand which is either an unknown one to me, or a disguised one. At the first glance, D'Israeli seemed the likeliest person to have written it; but upon a perusal, I was satisfied that he could not write a style which is at once so easy and so good. Then I thought of Rogers, who has both the wit and the feeling that the book displays; but I question whether he has the Cervantic humor, and moreover, he is a Dissenter. It may be Matthias, perhaps. . . . But, on the whole, I incline to fix it upon Frere; for in him (and I think in no other person) all the requisites for it are united."

In another letter he talks about a report that 'poor Coleridge' had said to Murray, the publisher, that he (Southey) was the author of 'The Doctor,' and says ambiguously, 'If there should be more volumes, the secret will probably be discovered, or the veil be laid aside.' Why this mystification, seeing that Southey had such a high opinion of 'The Doctor'—and of himself?

Will Mrs. Bray's historical and 'local' romances live? Hardly,—and that in spite of her industry and good taste. Her writings are pleasant reading, full of wholesome sentiment; they are a sound, if not rich, dinner claret, compared with the branded rubbish which is published nowadays by so many female novelists. At the best, however, they are well-written 'exercises,' after the manner of Sir Walter Scott. We prefer her 'Warleigh' and 'Fitz of Fitzford,' in which her accurate local knowledge is shown, to more ambitious historical romances like 'The White Hoods'; the plot of 'Warleigh' is, we may add, good and well-developed. In 'The White Hoods' history is perverted, though that is the fault of the authorities Mrs. Bray got up, rather than of Mrs. Bray herself. Pierre Van den Bossche, the right-hand man and lieutenant of Philip van Artevelde, was one of the greatest patriots and ablest popular leaders that the Fourteenth Century produced; yet in 'The White Hoods' he appears, under the designation of Peter du Bois, a vindictive and rather vulgar intriguer. Then, because Froissart says that a 'damoiselle' accompanied Philip van Artevelde from Ghent to the fatal field of Roosebeke, Mrs. Bray makes out this companion to be his mistress instead of his wife, Yolande van den Broucke. Mrs. Bray's romances afforded herself and her circle great pleasure; and, when taken along with her autobiography, prove what 'a dear old soul' she was. Such, we take it, will be something like the final judgment of posterity upon her and them.

Recollections of Charles Reade.

[Robert Buchanan, in *The Pall Mall Gazette*.]

IT WAS in the summer of 1876 that I first made the acquaintance of Charles Reade, at a little dinner given by Mr. John Coleman, then manager of the Queen's Theatre. The occasion was one especially interesting to me, as the great novelist (for great and in some respects unparalleled he will be found to be, when the time for his due appraisal comes) had expressed a desire to meet my sister-in-law, who, though still a very young girl in her teens, had risen into sudden distinction by the publication of the 'Queen of Connaught'—a work attributed in several quarters to Mr. Reade himself. Pleasant beyond measure was that night's meeting; pleasanter still the friendly intimacy which followed it, and lasted for years; for of all the many distinguished men that I have met, Charles Reade, when you knew him thoroughly, was one of the gentlest, sincerest, and most sympathetic. With the intellectual strength and bodily height of an Anak, he possessed the quiddity and animal spirits of Tom Thumb. He was learned, but wore his wisdom lightly, as became a true English gentleman of the old school. His manners had the stateliness of the last generation, such manners as I had known in the scholar Peacock, himself a prince of tale-tellers; and, to women especially, he had the grace and gallantry of the good old band of literary knights. Yet with all his courtly dignity he was as frank-hearted as a boy, and utterly without pretence. What struck me at once in him was his supreme veracity. Above all shams and pretences, he talked only of what he knew; and his knowledge, though limited in range, was large and memorable. At the period of our first acquaintance he was living at Albert Gate, with the bright and genial Mrs. Seymour as his devoted friend and housekeeper; and there, surrounded by his books of wonderful memoranda, he was ever happy to hold simple wassail with the few friends he loved. Gastronomically, his tastes were juvenile, and his table was

generally heaped with sweets and fruits. A magnificent whist and chess player, he would condescend to spend whole evenings at the primitive game of 'squares.' In these and all other respects, he was the least bookish, the least literary person that ever used a pen; indeed, if the truth must be told, his love for merely literary people was small, and he was consequently above all literary affectations. His keen insight went straight into a man's real acquirements and real experience, apart from verbal or artistic clothing, and he was ever illustrating in practice the potent injunction of Goethe—

Greift nur hinein in's volle Menschenleben!
Ein jeder lebt's, nicht vielen ist's bekannt,
Und wo ihr's packt, da ist's interessant!

His sympathy was for the living world, not for the world of mere ideas; and as his sympathy so was his religion—not a troubled, problem-haunted, querulous questioning of truths unrealized and unrealizable, but a simple, unpretending, humble, and faithful acquiescence in those divine laws which are written in the pages of Nature and on the human heart. He read few books, and abominated fine writing. I well remember his impatience when, taking up a novel of Ouida, and being pestered with a certain abominable iteration about 'an Ariadne,' he sent the book flying across the room before he had reached the end of the first chapter. For the literature of pure imagination he cared little or nothing, perhaps not quite enough. Among the letters of his in my possession is one in which, referring to certain conversations we had had on the subject of poetry, he utters the following dicta, following them up with the charming playfulness which was his most pleasant characteristic:

'Even Tennyson, to my mind,' he says, 'is only a prince of poetsasters.* I think with the ancients, in whose view the Poetæ Majores were versifiers who could tell a great story in great verse and adorn it with great speeches and fine descriptions; and the Poetæ Minores were versifiers who could do all the rest just as well, but could not tell a great story. In short, I look on poetry as fiction with the music of words. But, divorced from fiction, I do not much value the verbal faculty, nor the verbal music. And I believe this is the popular instinct, too, and that a musical story-teller would achieve an incredible popularity. *Reflechissez y!* Would have gone in for this myself long ago, but can only write

Example:

You and Miss Jay
Hope to see my play:
I hope so too.
Because—the day
You see my play,
I shall see *you!*

Vive la poésie!—Yours ever very truly, READE.

Here I may appropriately refer to his habit of signing with his surname only those letters which he reserved for intimate friends. In all his personal relations he was completely frank, charming, and gay-hearted. On the back of a photograph before me, taken at Margate, whither he had gone for the benefit of his health, he wrote as follows: 'Dear Miss Jay,—I inclose the benevolent Imbecile you say you require. It serves you right for not coming down to see me!—C. R. All previous attempts were solidified vinegar. This is the reaction, no doubt!' This was written not long before he encountered the great trouble of his later life, when the good and gracious friend who had made his home delightful to all who knew him was suddenly and cruelly taken away. 'Seymour,' as he used to call her very often, possessed much of his own fine frankness of character, and knew and loved him to the last with beautiful friendship and devotion. From the blow of her loss he never quite rallied. His grief was pitiful to see, in so strong a man; but from that moment forward he turned his thoughts heavenward, accepting with noble simplicity and humility the full promise of the Christian faith. Fortunately, I think, for him, his intellect had never been speculative in the religious direction; he possessed the wisdom which to so many nowadays is foolishness, and was able, as an old man, to become as a little child.

Any personal recollections of Charles Reade would be incomplete without some reference to his connection with the stage. From first to last he followed, with eager pertinacity, the will-o'-the-wisp of theatrical fame, descending into the arena to fight with wild beasts—among men who, neither in manhood nor in genius, had any right to be called his equals. Only in his latter days did he reap much pecuniary reward from the theatre, while

* This remark must be taken *cum grano salis*, and only in reference to the argument which follows. Reade was a warm admirer of the Poet Laureate. R. B.

to the very last he received scant respect from the ephemeral criticism of the day. But his love for the stage amounted to a passion, and more than once have I heard him say that he would rather earn five hundred pounds a year by writing plays than five thousand by writing novels. Unfortunately, he came upon a period when the dramatic art is without honor, and when the only standard of its success is commercial, and in his eagerness to meet halfway an uninstructed public—*monstrum in forma ingens—horrendum*—he had to call in the aid of the low comedian and the master carpenter. But if any reader would perceive how good work in this kind differs from bad, let him compare the literary workmanship of a play like 'Never Too Late to Mend' or 'The Wandering Heir' with any printed specimen of what is called in America the 'nailed-up' drama, or set side by side with that by Charles Reade any other translation or adaptation of the French piece known as 'The Courier of Lyons.' Even in his worst plays Charles Reade was a master of style.

Far away from and above his achievements in the acting drama stand the works by which my dear and lamented friend first made his reputation. The time is not yet ripe for a fit judgment on these works; but I am quite certain that if a poll of living novelists were taken it would be found that a large majority of them recognize Charles Reade, as Walter Besant some time ago nobly and fearlessly recognized him, as their master. Yet I read in your columns the other day that Trollope considered Reade 'almost a genius,' and I am informed by *The Observer* that 'to speak of the author of "Never Too Late to Mend" and "Hard Cash" as a man of genius would be an exaggeration.' 'O sæculum insipiens et inficetum!' Trollope, whose art was the art of Count Smalltork *plus* the bathos of vestrydom, Trollope, who could write a book about the West Indies without putting into it one poetical thought or line, passes judgment on a literary giant and pronounces him a genius—'almost!' The Sunday newspaper, which would doubtless canonize the author of 'John Inglesant,' measures this Colossus, and finds him of 'a tall man's height—no more!' Some of us, on the other hand, who are not to be daunted by bogus reputations, or to be awed by the idiocy of approved literary godhead, hold to our first faith that one man alone in our generation mastered the great craft of Homeric story-telling, and that this same man has created for us a type of womanhood which will live like flesh and blood when the heroines of Thackeray, Dickens, and George Eliot are relegated to the old curiosity shop of sawdust dolls. For my own part, I would rather have written 'The Cloister and the Hearth' than half-a-dozen 'Romolas,' and I would rather have been Charles Reade, great, neglected, and misunderstood in his generation, than the pretentious and pedagogic Talent which earned the tinsel crown of contemporary homage, to be speedily dethroned, and, in the good time that is coming for Genius, justly forgotten.

Current Criticism.

HENRY J. BYRON AND HIS JOKES:—Those who recall Byron in the three or four characters, like Sir Simon Simple, which he designed expressly for himself and in which he appeared on the stage, may almost be said to have personally known him. He had in private life the same quiet, hesitating manner he adopted on the boards, and his quips and retorts were delivered in private life in exactly his stage manner. Of the kind of animal spirits that not seldom distinguishes the comedian, that made the life of Sothorn, so long as his health lasted, one huge practical joke, of the vitality and the magnetism that make a man like Mr. Irving or Mr. Toole the centre of any company into which he may venture, Byron knew nothing. He uttered rather jerkily and with some apparent effort the retort or the banter that came into his mind, was content with the laughter of those near him, and seldom bade for the applause of an entire table.—*The Pall Mall Gazette*.

MISS DUFFUS HARDY IN THE SLUMS:—We cannot think that an English lady is in her proper place when she visits the *maisons de tolerance* of the Chinese quarter in San Francisco, and if this is thought to be a harsh judgment, it would be surely harsher to adopt the only possible alternative, and say that she is in her proper place. Neither do we like to hear of one of our countrywomen repeatedly trying to introduce the subject of polygamy in Mormon society, and being politely foiled. These objections are of course very antiquated, but they happen to express our sentiments, by which we mean to stick. Other people are quite at liberty to accompany Miss Hardy among Chinese daughters of marble, and to speculate with her on the particular causes which attract women to Mormonism if they like. She has done her best to at-

tract and satisfy the general reader, not only by the above-mentioned fine writing, but by taking up such tricks as narration in the present tense and the like. Doubtless she will have her reward; and here also, if she likes it and her readers like it, we have nothing to say. But as there are readers, as in the other case, who may not like it, it is just as well to mention the fact.—*The Saturday Review*.

CHARLES READE'S MEN AND WOMEN:—Charles Reade was neither a Dickens nor a Thackeray. But he was for all that—and, in the interest of English letters, it cannot be too plainly or firmly said—a great and a fine novelist. For, first of all, he was a creator; and creation is the touchstone, if touchstone there be. His men and women, the last particularly, were true and breathing flesh and blood; and no writer in the language, Thackeray and Dickens not excepted, ever showed the bloom of English girlhood in a brighter and more sympathetic light. His young lovers, those stumbling-blocks of the novelist, of whom even Walter Scott could make but little, have a singular attraction for the kindred soul. Chiefly among them in our memory live the healthy and direct young couple whose simple, faithful passion runs like a golden thread through the painful madhouse story (too painfully true in all its detailed possibilities, we fear, cheap and easy as it is to dismiss them as 'overdrawn'), and makes all the pulses, of those who have any, thrill with theirs.—*The Saturday Review*.

Notes

CHARLES READE has left by will an oil-portrait of himself, to be sent to Harper & Bros. 'for their editorial room.' There are four editorial rooms in the Harper establishment, so the question naturally arises which room will have it. The only way to settle the question is for the firm to hang it up in their inner sanctuary—that mysterious apartment whose swinging doors give glimpses of Queen Anne luxury to the waiting author in the outer room.

It has been stated in the papers that Charles Reade left a fortune of \$100,000. This is denied by a relative and friend of Mr. Reade in this city, who says that he knows the novelist was worth \$500,000. All of this fortune was not made out of literature. Mr. Reade was a shrewd business man, and speculated successfully in leases.

Miss Emelyn Washburn's 'Early Spanish Masters,' favorably reviewed in our issue of April 26, is published by G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Mr. Harris's new book, 'Mingo, and Other Sketches in Black and White,' to be issued by Osgood about the end of the present month, will be made up of 'At Teague Poteet's,' republished from *The Century*, 'Blue Dan,' and another hitherto unprinted story, besides the sketch that gives its title to the book, and which appeared originally in *Harper's Christmas*. David Douglas, of Edinburgh, will print an English edition of the book.

Arthur Gilman's 'History of the American People' will be brought out in England as well as in this country.

Mr. Henri Pène du Bois writes, in reply to Mr. William F. Peck's communication in our last issue, that Alexandre Dumas père was not a member of the French Academy. A good deal has been said of the *amende honorable* in the election of his son to one of the forty chairs.

The leading article in the June *Harper's* is one on Biarritz, written by Mrs. Lillie and illustrated by C. S. Reinhart. Mr. John Esten Cooke has written a story called 'Grace Sherwood, the One Virginia Witch.' To those who thought that witchcraft was confined to New England, it will be a shock to know that even one witch flourished in the land of the cavaliers. 'Little Elsie,' a poem by Mrs. Dinah Maria Craik, will appear in this number.

Mr. S. E. Dawson, of Montreal, has brought out a second edition of his study of 'The Princess,' which has an interest beyond the first, as it contains a long letter from Lord Tennyson (which we reproduce in another column), giving the poet's own notes and reflections on the poem.

The Chevalier Wikoff, whose death, at a ripe old age, was announced last week, has claims to notice in a literary paper as the author of two or three books. He was not a man-of-letters by profession, but followed diplomacy for a livelihood. He was accomplished in the ways of the world, and, although born in America, was a citizen of no one country. His life was full of adventure, not always of the most heroic sort, according to his

own confession; but it is thought by those who knew him best that he was not as vicious as he sometimes painted himself. The Chevalier died in England, where the wants of his last days were supplied by an old friend.

In the June *Century* President Eliot of Harvard will attempt to answer the question, 'What is a Liberal Education?' In the July number, ex-President Woolsey of Yale will write of 'Honorary Degrees.' Co-education and the study of Greek will be discussed in later articles, and Mr. Arthur Gilman, manager of the Harvard Annex for women, will conclude the series with a paper on 'The Collegiate Study of Women.'

A new edition of the Autobiography of James Nasmyth, edited by Prof. Smiles, is soon to be published by Messrs. Harper. It has been revised and extended by Mr. Nasmyth especially for American readers.

'Mothers in Council,' which the Messrs. Harper have in press, is a volume made up of a series of discussions on domestic questions by a group of mothers in a Virginia town. It will be published anonymously, and will be a book to excite the interest of the many mothers who were not members of this august body.

Mr. Edwin Mead, author of 'The Philosophy of Carlyle,' 'Martin Luther,' etc., has been lecturing in Cleveland on the Pilgrim Fathers.

The attractive cover to Rupert Van Wert's 'Rip Van Winkle in Asia and Africa' (Crowell) is not a delusion and a snare. The book seems an interesting and desirable one for children. The pictures are good, the information reliable, and the style not too dry while pleasingly free from too much fiction.

An interesting article on the always-timely subject of Arctic exploration is Lieut. Schwatka's 'Icebergs and Icefloes' in last week's *Science*.

Mrs. Martha J. Lamb's interesting papers on 'Wall Street in History,' which appeared first in *The Magazine of American History*, have been reprinted in book-form, with all their excellent illustrations, by Funk & Wagnalls.

Dr. Howard Crosby has recovered from the attack of pneumonia by which he was prostrated last week.

The next session of the Sauveur School of Languages (July 7 to August 18) will be held at the University of Vermont, Burlington, Vt., instead of at Amherst, Mass., as hitherto. This change of base has been made in order to secure a place somewhat larger than Amherst, and also 'cooler, healthier, and more attractive.' Yet Amherst was sufficiently attractive last summer—or at least Prof. Sauveur's school was—to bring 321 pupils into his language-classes.

Mr. Brander Matthews has an interesting paper on 'Sheridan and his Biographers' in the current number of *The Princeton Review*, in which almost every one who has written about the author of 'The School for Scandal' is dealt with except Mr. Richard Grant White, who wrote the biographical preface for the edition of Sheridan's plays published recently by Dodd, Mead & Co. In this paper Mr. Matthews hints at a biography of Sheridan which he has under way, to accompany an edition of the dramatist's comedies.

The new volume by W. H. Mallock, entitled 'Property and Progress,' which will be published in a few days by G. P. Putnam's Sons, fully discusses the theories and suggestions contained in Henry George's 'Progress and Poverty.'

Matthew Arnold's essay on Emerson, based on the lecture delivered in this country, will appear in the May number of *Macmillan's Magazine*.

A small volume of 'Reflections in Palestine,' selected from letters written by General Gordon during his recent sojourn in the Holy Land, will be published by Macmillan & Co. immediately. The General left instructions for its publication before his departure for the Soudan.

Among the features of the June number of *The English Illustrated* will be the commencement of a story by Henry James.

Miss Héloïse Durant's 'powder-and-patch' comedy, 'Raoul Coquelin,' was played successfully at the University Club Theatre, on Monday and Tuesday evenings, for the benefit of the Sheltering Arms. The company was composed of amateurs, Miss Durant herself playing very acceptably the part of the heroine. Mr. Coward, perhaps the best amateur in the city, took the title-rôle. The play is bright and charming, and affords an excellent opportunity for pretty dressing—a merit not to be overlooked in choosing a piece for players who can avail themselves of the opportunity thus afforded.

A very interesting collection of historical portraits is on exhibition at the parlors of the Calumet Club, No. 3 West Thirtieth Street. It includes a Doge of Venice, attributed to Tintoretto, a nobleman ascribed to Holbein, authentic works of Copley, Stuart, Opie, West and Rembrandt Peale, and some excellent examples of the younger artists of New York—Chase, Weir, Lathrop, etc. It is hoped that the present exhibition may be the forerunner of a larger display of the same character in the fall, for the benefit of the Pedestal Fund.

The Free Parliament.

[Communications must be accompanied with the name and address of the correspondent, not necessarily for publication. Correspondents answering or referring to any question are requested to give the number of the question for convenience of reference.]

QUESTIONS.

No. 676.—Are there better editions than the Aldine of the poets named below? Akenaside, Beattie, Butler, Churchill, Collins, Falconer, Goldsmith, Gray, Kirke White, Parnell, Prior, Surrey, Swift, Thompson, Wyatt, Young, Blake, Rogers, Campbell, Herbert and Vaughan.

PITTSBURGH, PA.

J. W. B.

[The Aldines, though old, are generally considered the best, so far as their contents are concerned. They are edited by the best men, and give the best text. In size they are uniform. But there are larger and, considering only the outward appearance of the volumes, finer editions of most of the poets named. Blake, Rogers, Campbell, Herbert and Vaughan are issued in a supplementary series of the Aldine Poets.]

No. 677.—Where can we get 'Stephen Girard's Will and the Cost of Building Girard College?'

WINSTON, N. C.

WILLIAMSON & CORRIE.

No. 678.—Can any one give me any information in regard to Maurus Jókai, an Hungarian novelist, and the character of his works?

NEW YORK CITY.

T.

No. 679.—Who was the first poet to write in America?

OLYMPIA, WASH. T.

G. B. J.

[Griswold's 'Poets and Poetry of America' favors the claim of George Landys, who, while Treasurer for the Colony in Virginia, about the year 1625, wrote 'probably the earliest English verse produced in America.' He completed in Virginia his translation of the 'Metamorphoses,' dating thence his dedication to the King.' According to the same authority, 'the first poem composed in this country was a description of New England, in Latin, by the Rev. Wm. Morrell, who came to the Plymouth Colony in 1623 and returned to England in the following year.' There was little demand for poetry in Plymouth Colony at that early date.]

No. 680.—Is Mrs. Trollope's 'Domestic Life Among the Americans' out of print? If not, who publishes it?

WISCASSETT, ME.

H. O. E.

[The book is out of print, but may occasionally be found at the bookstores. It is in two volumes.]

ANSWERS.

No. 669.—E. B. F. will find the 'song,' 'The old Israelites knew,' etc., in a collection of hymns, used by the Methodists many years ago, entitled 'The Camp-Meeting Chorister.' In an edition of mine it is on pp. 179-181. A copy of the hymn can be had from me, at 437 O. Street, N. W.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

J. S. C.

No. 681.—Who published Levi Coffin's Autobiography, and the Autobiography of Steve Burroughs, and where can I get copies of them?

HIGH SCHOOL, ALBANY, N. Y.

O. D. ROBINSON.

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